

Priorities Committee Meeting_Mar08_2016

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE**Impact of Bill 20: Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2015, on County advertising****Report Purpose**

To provide the Priorities Committee with an overview of Strathcona County's advertising expenditures and how these might be impacted by the provisions of Bill 20 (the "Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2015.")

Council History

November 30, 2015 – Council directed Administration to provide a report to Priorities Committee, before the end of the second quarter of 2016, outlining the potential impact of the provisions of Bill 20 (and any other known Municipal Government Act Amendments) on County advertising.

Strategic Plan Priority Areas

Economy: Strathcona County departments spend approximately \$250,000 each year to advertise County programs and services, and to educate and inform residents. In 2015, 10 per cent, or about \$25,000, of this cost was for advertisements deemed legally required under the *Municipal Government Act*. Examples include notices of public hearings, notices of intent to borrow, fire bans, assessment notices and weed control in parks. Of this expenditure, approximately 60 per cent was covered as part of the application fee to amend the Land Use Bylaw (LUB), Municipal Development Plan (MDP), Area Structure Plan (ASP) and conceptual schemes.

Governance: Changes proposed as part of the *Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2015*, will provide local governments with more flexibility in terms of how they choose to make residents aware of legally required notices.

Social: N/A

Culture: N/A

Environment: N/A

Other Impacts

Policy: N/A

Legislative/Legal: The provisions of the *Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2015*, that have been proclaimed include Part 4.1 (city charters) and sections related to off-site levies. The balance of the Act will come into force on proclamation.

Interdepartmental: Any change in how Strathcona County notifies residents will impact those departments that run legally required advertisements – Planning and Development Services, Financial Services, Assessment and Tax, Utilities, Recreation Parks and Culture, and Emergency Services.

Summary

Bill 20 received royal assent March 30, 2015, and is now the *Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2015* (the "Act.") Only the provisions with respect to city charters and off-site levies have been proclaimed as at the date of this report. The balance of the Act is expected to be proclaimed before the end of 2016. Until such time as the provisions related to advertisement and public notice are proclaimed, the requirements for public notification remain unchanged.

Once sections 56 – 59 of the Act have been proclaimed, Strathcona County could choose to pass a bylaw (after holding a public hearing) that could allow for electronic means for advertising proposed bylaws, resolutions, meetings, public hearings and other matters referred to in section 606 of the *Municipal Government Act*. This may include notifications on its website, rather than place ads in the local paper. This change could result in a possible savings of approximately \$10,000 per year.

Communication Plan

A copy of the advertising report will be shared with department directors and communicators for information. Should the provisions of the Act related to proposed changes to public notification come into effect, further communication will be required to determine how best to proceed.

Enclosure

1 2015 advertising highlights